Goals

A slightly overhead view of a recreational athletic complex, seen from the height of a small building's rooftop, or an overpass. Pavement in the foreground, beyond it a grass field with goals of all shapes and sizes, and then the sea. No people at all.

The pavement is a reddish brown, with faded painted yellow lines that don't clearly correspond to any immediately recognizable game. Puddles that have yet to dry. Puddles like grease stains. Two white volleyball nets (or badminton nets) are up, next to one another, parallel to the bottom edge of the canvas. The poles holding them up have very little base, and therefore appear to be permanently cemented into the ground. A chain-linked fence encloses the pavement. Along the fence are small soccer goals, or perhaps hockey goals, all chained up except for two: two red-and-white striped little goals, red-and-white like candy canes, pushed up against the fence, facing us. It's the most conspicuous color of the painting, this red-and-white, and immediately draws the eye. They're touching, side by side, almost as if to form one big goal, these two candy-colored goals are. But life doesn't work like that; it doesn't look like one big goal, twice the size of the two smaller ones; it looks like two separate goals, side by side. Kick a ball right down the middle, and it will hit the goalposts, where the two goals meet.

On the other side of the chain-linked fence is the soccer field. Big and small goals, but the big goals can only be for soccer. The big soccer goals are parallel to the base of the painting and white like the volleyball nets on the pavement. Their geometry, white and rectangular, and the volleyball net's geometry, somewhat echo each other. Connecting pavement to grass. The smaller goals on the grass are the same as the twin red-and-white goals

on the pavement. On the grass, there are four of them, perpendicular to the base of the painting, spaced out two-by-two to form two fields. Two small goals facing each other to form one field, and then two more goals facing each other to form another. And then…

Enclosing the field on the right are low, yellow buildings with red rooftops. Trees at the end, by the sea. Enclosing the field on the left is a white wall, and beyond this wall, a long white building. Trees where the long white wall meets the pavement. The sea on the far side, and the pavement on the near side. It could almost be a schoolyard, enclosed as it is. Or the facilities of a private academy, considering the real estate values of waterfront properties. We don't know. We just know it's a big field with lots of goals, for all kinds of games, and it's in a beautiful setting, and the sky is blue, but cloudy, sunless, so it can't be all that hot, and the goals themselves are attractive and new, especially the ones that look like fresh candy canes, what kid wouldn't want to shoot on those? It's a young soccer player's dream. It's any kid's dream. What kid, whose playground is this, would grow up not dreaming of soccer? All that, and yet, not a soul.

Why? Maybe everyone's like the artist, the astute viewer admiring the painting thinks. Maybe everyone is standing with the artist, admiring the view. Thinking how pretty it is with no one on it. How pretty it is when there's no one to distract you, and you can just meditate, and think about the goals.